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583 A. A widow

B. A girl, or the question of husband-sons-in-law

A. Marriage of a Widow

587 One marries a widow without having to pay for her when she is indigent and finds herself after the death of her husband with three or four children; when furthermore she is alone in the world by reason of the fact that she has no brothers-in-law, or if she has, they are too poor to provide for her needs. This is then the case of widows without means of subsistence.

583 /113/ There are naturally few with a taste for this kind of
587 marriage, for those who venture into such will have to raise another person's children, who, sooner or later, if they do not return bad for good, will at least be very little grateful for the care which has been given them. This kind of marriage is literally that called by the Chinese tchao fou iang tse, i.e., "looking for a husband who will feed the children." Although these unions are not advantageous for the husband, nevertheless there are always poor men of some age who, attracted by the hope of offspring, decide to expose themselves to the dangers of such a union, or who rather allow themselves tobe tempted by the widow. Indeed, the terms of this marriage say clearly that it is the widow who is seeking the husband. That says enough,
534 that these unions are not highly prized. In such a marriage, the two
587 parties agree on it first between themselves. Their decision made, they themselves invite a go-between, who will go to see the paternal uncles and the grandparents of the children. The T'ou-jen family has an agnatic base, and the family system is that of the large family
589 with community of property. On the death of the husband, the
421 widow remains therefore within the domain of the community; consequently, it will be necessary to recognize her owners. But since this property is rather a burden for them, it will be easy to come to an agreement. Furthermore, the widow's family knows that if it is not accommodating, the widow will be able to give them a lot of trouble.

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587 593 764 The conditions the family lays down are the following: the sons will remain the descendants of the dead man; they will continue to bear his name and will later be buried in their father's cemetery. The new husband will bring them up and feed them. When they reach marriageable age, he will buy them a wife, or he will give the family the required sum ad hoc; then he will be able to send away the married ones, who will provide for their own subsistence. As for the daughters, he will be able to sell them. Since he obligates himself for expenses which so many burdens necessitate, the family does not demand any compensation for the widow.

587 589 578 #21 /114/ It often happens that as a consequence of misunderstandings and quarrels, the brothers divide up the property and debts among themselves and form independent families. When a widow of such a family wants to remarry, the family requires the new husband to recognize the debts of the dead man; and the creditors exert pressure on the family to prevent the marriage in case of refusal; but if they are lucky enough to be dealing with a virago who threatens to come with her children and live with them, the difficulties vanish, the debts are put on the children's account and will be demanded later when the children are grown.

587 #28 593 In the case where the widow with her children has inherited several plots of land from her dead husband, the new husband will be able to work them to support his family, but he will not be able to sell them since they are the property of the male orphans /sic/. Once they are married, the latter can demand these lands and send their foster father away with their mother, which often happens; if they get along well, they stay together. If, on the other hand, the new husband has lands of his own, and the widow does not, he maintains the family, gets the sons married, and sends them away. If during the marriage the family becomes richer, if the patrimony increases, and children are born of the new marriage, the children of the first husband will receive the share of their dead father plus half of the lands and assets acquired after the second marriage. The personal properties of the new husband are inherited by his own children. If the husband happens to die without leaving children, his personal

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606 587 593 ahead of all the other members of the family. What is typical is that they call the money given to the mother-in-law k'ai k'eou ts'ien, "the sum which opens her mouth," for if she does not open her mouth, that is to say, if she does not consent, the marriage comes to nought. /156/

b) Succession on the maternal side.

562 593 588 Without admitting a former matriarchate, how can one explain the situation of the women in the series of marriages to the prayer pole, etc.? In this case the "girl-mother" is seen to enjoy all the rights of a married woman, her children bear her name and inherit in her clan beside the children of her brothers. This is certainly the case which makes kinship, order of succession, and the property of the family pass on the mother's side. This single case which continues to exist in the middle of a patriarchal period in which the children of daughters as well as their mother are considered as outside the family, deserves all attention.

c). Admission into the family of children born of outsider fathers.

843 Is it not permitted to see vestiges of the matriarchate in the great facility with which they admit into the family the children of daughters-in-law and widows, born certainly of fathers who are outsiders; partus sequitur ventrem /"offspring proceed from the womb"/: they recognize only the mother. We have seen that here they are in a period of transition which begins to make this practice more and more difficult.

562 421 593 574 d) Frequent family visits of the daughter-in-law and right to keep her property at her mother's home.

Again what can be said of the abnormal custom which allows the daughter-in-law these frequent visits and these long vacations with her family? This custom is not natural in a patriarchal organization where the daughter-in-law is the property of her husband, and where she must give this clan her life, her time, and all her work. This custom gives the impression that the daughter, after marriage, always continues to live with her own family and not that of her husband, (1) all the more /157/ because she keeps at her parents' home

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Ma 574 593

1. Shirokogoroff, op. cit., pp. 90-91: The second long visit of the newly married wife in her mother's house may be also understood as a survival of the customs that prescribed to the newly married wife to keep her place in her mother's house. Furthermore the Manchus never say "the wife's father's clan" but "the wife's mother's clan." At the same time they say "the husband's clan" and "the husband's father's clan." Thus all these facts cannot be explained without a supposition of the materline clan system in the past. /Cited in English./

Mo 562 421 593 574 her finest clothes, her ornaments, her jewels, and everything that is dear to her. One keeps one's treasures at one's home; now, the home of the daughter-in-law does not seem to be near her husband. This last custom, which still effectively recognizes that the wife today has certain property rights, does not belong to a patriarchal organization; furthermore, we saw in the speech of the master of ceremonies that formerly the daughter enjoyed property rights since in her own family she inherited half of a son's share.

e) Festivities at the birth of daughters.

Mo 527 844 We shall describe elsewhere the extraordinary noisy festivities in which the whole village takes part, given on the occasion of the birth of the first child of a daughter-in-law, whether this child be a son or daughter, the celebration is equally solemn. Now such a festivity upon the birth of a daughter is again absolutely abnormal in a patriarchal system, where only the male descendant counts. We must note that already in many T'ou-jen families this festivity is celebrated only upon the birth of the first son. This celebration is absolutely inconceivable to a Chinese mind.

Mo [17]

f) Wedding dinner at the bride's home.

Mo 585 562 In a patriarchal system how does one justify the dinner given at the bride's home for the members of her family alone on the eve of

4: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

ripe old age, with the result that they turn out to be steady and sound business men, wearing religious clothes. Necessarily, the precepts and rules of the monastic life come more often to be honored in the breach than in the observance, and so the lamas drag each other down hill. 792

COMMUNITY OF LAMAS

How does a lamasery control its members and provide for their education? This is done through two organizations, the community of the lamas and the colleges or faculties.

Lamaseries have to control their lamas because they are responsible to the Chinese Government for the crimes and injustices caused by their members. Many lamas not dependent on any lamasery live in the country dressed as lamas and earn their own living, and do not involve any lamasery in the troubles they might cause.

In order to become a member of a lamasery, the name of the applicant must be entered on the roll of the organic community of the lamas. This carries with it permission to live in the monastery, to share its benefits and support, and to become a member of any college. The organic community of the lamas administers the entire lamasery; it fixes the rules observed by all the lamas of the institution; it sees to their observance and inflicts punishment for infractions. The community of the lamas is the hub around which the entire lamasery revolves. It possesses its own wealth and has its independent administration, as has been explained (p. 38). The main temple of the lamasery is its property and in it all the lamas have to convene in the early morning to read texts. Every time the main temple is destroyed (as by revolts or fire), the organic community of the lamas must rebuild it. [42]

In December, 1912, the vast temple of Kumbum disappeared in a furious blaze after the morning convention of the lamas. The adjacent temple, containing the dried trunk of the fabulous tree, was preserved, but the entire precious library, splendid old tapestries, precious embroidered streamers, paintings, the large Buddha painting, 21 meters in length and 15 meters in width, which was hung every year on the mountain at the festival, two enormous butter lamps of massive silver, the entire wardrobe and masks used in the theatrical performances, silver *chortens* containing the ashes of celebrated Living Buddhas, disappeared in the blaze. The guardians of the temple disappeared at full speed. Devoted old lamas testified that Tsong-khapa had punished Kumbum whose old fervor had decayed. I saw the whole community, old and young, devoutly carrying the ashes of the temple on their backs into an enclosure, because it was stated that the ashes, hallowed by the prayers said in the temple, must not be allowed to be desecrated. The intendants of the community of the lamas toured the Tibetan and Mongol countries 175 792 [42]

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